H. 8.

THE CLOUDS

IN WHICH

CHRIST Comes.

OPENED

In a SERMON before the Honourable House of *COMMONS*, assembled in Parliament, upon the Solemne Day of their Monthly Fast, *Octob.* 27. 1647.

By PETER STERRY, *Sometimes Fellow of* Emanuel Colledge *in* Cambridge:

AND

Now Preacher of the Gospel in *LONDON.*

Published by Order of that House.

LONDON,

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XUM

Die Mercurii 27 Octob. 1647.

ORdered by the Commons Assembled in Parliament: That M. *Liste*, do from this House give thankes to M. *Sterry*, for the great paines he took in his Sermon Preached this day at *Margarets Westminster*, before the House of Commons; and that he desire him to Print his Sermon, wherein he is to have the like priviledge in printing of it, as others in the like kinde usually have had.

H. Elsynge Cler. Parl. D. Com.

I appoint *Robert Dawlman* to Print this Sermon, and no man else.

PETER STERRY.

TO THE HONORABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Assembled in PARLIAMENT.

Noble Senatours,

NOt *like* Araunah *in the Holy Story, as a King in Spirituall Things: but like the Widow in the Gospell, Poore in the Riches of Christ, and too much a Widow by the absence of her Heavenly Spouse, my Soule hath offered from her Penury to your Treasury.*

Yet, as a Steward, have I endeavoured to be Faithfull, bringing forth the Best of my Spirit, for Service, and Food to your Spirits: as the Priests of old gave the Fat of the Sacrifices to the Flame on the Altar.

As the Royall Preacher sought out Choice

Words: So have I sought for the most Pleasant, most Profitable, most Powerfull Discoveries of God, in my Scanty Store, in the midst of that Thick Ignorance, which covers my Poore Heart.

Now I have laid them at your Feet, where they lye, as Scattered, and Dry Bones; except the Spirit of our Lord Jesus breath upon them, bring them together, infuse a Warmth, Power, and Beauty into them, to make them Living Company for you.

Not able to bring Stately, and Costly Beasts to the Sanctuary; I have made it my Desire, and Designe to present for an Offering before God, and You, a Payre of Turtle Doves; Simplicity, and Sweetnesse; or, an Innocent Integrity with an Humble Meekenesse.

I hope both are, if not without blemish, because they have alighted on my Heart: yet of the right-breed of that Dove, which de-

deſcended from Heaven, and alighted on the Head of our Lord Jeſus.

And now, what is my Expectation? For my owne Soule, for my Brethren in the Fleſh, all the Children of Seth, *for the reſt of my Fellow Creatures, which groane continually in my Eares? Is not my deſire and Sighing before thee, O my God? Even This; The Deſcent of the Dove upon them; the Manifeſtation of the Spirit in them, the True Jubile, the Divine Liberty of the whole Creation.*

All within me teſtifies of this Spirit to me; All without me proclaimes this Spirit before Me; as the Spring of my Joyes; the End of my Faith; the Glorification of my Perſon; and not of mine onely, but of all thoſe, who are rooted in this Principle of Life, what ever the Soile of Education, Profeſſion, or Cuſtome be, in which they are Planted; whatever the Barke of Opinion or Af-

fection be, in which for the preſent they are Incloſed.

The moſt Known Men for Wiſedome in all Languages, Learnings, Religions, Ages, Regions have worſhip't, have waited for This Eternall Spirit; The Underſtanding of the World, riding forth in a Chariot of Light, upon the Face of all Formes of Things; The Good Converting All Things into it ſelfe; The Unity, or ſome-thing above an Unity, To τὸν, *The Supreame Band of Unity, and Multiplicity.*

This Spirit brought forth from it ſelfe the Creation, and ſtill ſits upon it, hatching it, till it breake the Shell of This Darke Fleſh, and ſpring forth into its owne Life and Image.

The Lord Jeſus is this Spirit; who is, before Abraham *was, by whom the Worlds were Made; who is a Spirit, Comprehending, Cheriſhing, Encloſing, Comming forth into*

into all the Fleſhly Births of Time.

This Jeſus came Himſelfe in the Laſt of Times, into Fleſh; was by His Croſſe drawn up out of it into Spirit; and now by the ſame way is drawing up all Things after Him into the ſame Spirit.

That your ſelves, and theſe Kingdomes may Feele, Obey, Enjoy the Drawings of this Jeſus, the Deſcents of his Spirit, is the Affectionate Prayer of him, who is

Your Honours loweſt

Servant in Chriſt:

PETER STERRY.

Reader, thou art intreated before thou Reade, to mend with thy Pen theſe Greater faults eſcaped in Printing.

Pag. 3. *lin.* 15. *read*, the blade, eare, and huske to the Corne. *p.* 7. *l.* 22. *r.* Rayes. *p.* 18. *l.* 7. *r.* ſlides. & *l.* 21. *r.* Ayre. *p.* 21. *l.* 30. *r.* Sea of this Creation to ſeeth. *p.* 23. *l.* 3. *r.* were for the moſt part by flames. *p.* 29. *l.* 26. *r.* Day? *p.* 39. *l.* 18. *r.* in the Courſe. *p.* 54. *l.* 4. *r.* Things. When

A Sermon Preached at a late Faſt, before the Honourable Houſe of *Commons*.

Revel. i. 7.

Behold, he commeth with clouds, and every eye ſhall ſee him, and they alſo which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth ſhall waile becauſe of him.

The Context.

I Shall make my way through the Context to my Text; ſo ſhall we fall more Clearly and Kindly into it.

Saint *John* in this Book makes from His Time, a Diſcovery of Thoſe Things, which Are, and Are to Be, till the World ſhould Be no more. So the Greek addes to the ſecond verſe this Clauſe, *Both Thoſe things,*

 that

that Are, and Thoſe things, which are Ordained to Be, after Them.

The Manner and Matter of this Diſcovery are Both expreſt in the Title and Firſt words of this Book, *The Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.* Divines tell us, There are Two Glaſſes, in which All Things are ſeen, that are ſeen by a Prophetick Light, or a Light of Glory: *The Perſon of our Lord Jeſus*; and *The Trinity.* The Scene of this whole Diſcourſe or Diſcovery, called, *The Revelation*; from one end of the Book to the other, lyes in the Perſon of our Bleſſed Saviour.

This Divine Diſcourſe is caſt into the forme of an Epiſtle, convey'd by the Tongue of an Angel, the Hand of an Evangeliſt, to the Seven Churches in *Aſia.*

Epiſt. This Epiſtle hath Foure Parts:

1. A *Salutation.*
2. A two-fold *Preface.*
3. A *Narration.*
4. A *Concluſion.*

1. Part. *Salut.* The Salutation begins with the fourth verſe, and ends where my Text begins. It conſiſts of

Prayers
and
Praiſes.

Both Parts, Prayer and Praiſe, have for their Deſign, a Deſcription of that Perſon, which is the Ground and Argument of all that Prophetick ſtory, which the Epiſtle repreſents *From*, and *In* Heaven. This Perſon is our *Jeſus*, not according to that Fleſhly Shape, in which He walkt among men, below: but according to that Spi-

Spirituall Forme, that Divine Figure, in which He ſits with God, and ſhines forth on Angels, above.

1. *Prayer.* The Firſt Part in the Salutation is Prayer. This hath a Three-fold Deſcription of our Saviours Divine Perſon:

1. A *Diſtinction of Times in the Perſon of Chriſt.*
2. A *Diſtinction of Things.*
3. An *Union of Times and Things in Him.*

A diſtinction of Times in Chriſt. This you may reade in the 4. verſe, *From Him, Which Is, Which Was, and Which is to Come.* The whole Frame of Things is built with a Three-fold Partition, like the Temple, which makes a Three-fold Kingdome: 1. That of *Nature.* 2. That of the *Mediatour.* 3. That of the *Father.* Theſe Three Kingdomes have their Full Revolutions, and Severall Periods in that One Majeſtick Perſon of our Saviour. 1. *Deſcrip.*

1. *The Kingdome of Nature* lyes in the Glory of Chriſts Perſon, as *Paſt.* The firſt Creation was a kind of Inearnation; for in that, the Image of God was made Fleſh. Jeſus Chriſt was the Seed of the world. God calls him, *The Seed of the Woman, Gen.* 3. 15. He is the Seed in the Woman, which Sends Her forth, and Growes up out of Her. The Woman and the World are to Jeſus Chriſt, as the Corne to the Blade, Eare and Huske. You reade, *Rev.* 1. 15. *The Feet of Chriſt* were *like unto Fine Braſſe, as if they were Burning in a Fornace.* The Formes of Nature are the Feet of the Lord Jeſus.

Theſe are in the Divine Brightneſſe of his Immortall Perſon, as in a Flame; *Conſumed* in the *Heat* of a Greater Glory: yet ſtil *Conſpicuous* and Tranſparent through the *Light* of it. Therefore in this Kingdome, our Lord raignes with this Title, *He That Was.*

2. *The Kingdome of the Mediatour.* This is the Vnion or Marriage of the Two other Kingdoms, of *Nature*, and the *Father*; *Time* and *Eternity.* This is, as a Flouriſhing Picture, which conſiſts of Light and Shadow, making of Both, One Beauty. God is the *Light*, the Creature the *Shadow*, which here are interwoven, and ſhine mutually; The Creature *By* God, God *In* the Creature: ſo Both make but One Appearance, One Kingdome.

This is the Middle-ſtate of things: Thorow this, God firſt Deſcends into Nature: Thorow this, All Things Aſcend and return again out of Nature unto God. Therefore this is cal'd *Regnum Mediatorium*: This is properly the Kingdome of Chriſt, as he is the *Mediator*: In this our Lord Jeſus is according to his Proper State and Perſon, known by This name, *He That Is.*

3. *The Kingdome of the Father.* Here the God-head reignes in the *Fulneſſe* of an *Unmixt*, the *Freedome* of an *Unlimited* Glory. The Kingdome of Chriſt is ever in Motion, till at laſt it roul it ſelfe into this *ſea*, where it Perfectly *loſeth*, and yet more Perfectly then ever, *keeps* its own *Diſtinct State.* This is the Firſt Deſcription.

2. *Deſcrip.* *A Diſtinction of Things in the Perſon of Chriſt: And from the ſeven Spirits, which are before His Throne, ver.* 4.

If theſe *Spirits* were Angels, they would in this place juſtifie and reward the Papiſts in their prayers to thoſe Flaming Miniſters. God is a *Spirit*, but He is *One*. Theſe then are ſome Middle-thing, not by *Negation*, that cannot be; but by *Participation*.

Seven is the Perfect number of the Creature comprehending its Labour and its Reſt; its Six Dayes, and its Sabbath. *Seven* times *Seven* is the Great Jubile, the Joy of All Things, in which they are Free, and Return to their Firſt State.

God then As He varies himſelfe into all the Diſtinct Formes of the Creature, as he carries them on thorow their Severall Changes, till he carry them up to His own Vnchangeable Reſt: So He is a *Seven-fold Spirit*. And this is the Spirituall Perſon of our Lord Jeſus; *Pan's* Pipe compoſed of ſeven reeds; *Seven* being known by learned men for the Marriage-number.

Revel. 5. 6. *A* Lamb *ſtands with ſeven hornes, and ſeven eyes*, which are The *Seven Spirits of God, ſent forth into all the earth*. This is that *Great Spirit* our Lord Jeſus, who in the form of a Seven-fold Spirit like a River with ſeven heads, lets forth the God-head and the Creation, one into another.

The Union of all Times and Things in One Perſon. 3. *Deſcrip.* This is the firſt part of the fifth verſe. This Vnion is ſet forth by a Three-fold Expreſſion:

1. *The Appearance of all things in Chriſt.*
2. *The Preſence of Chriſt in all.*
3. *The Power of Chriſt over all.*

1. *The Appearance of all things in Chriſt: Jeſus Chriſt the faithfull witneſſe.*

Our Lord Jeſus in glory is become the *Image*, and the *Light*: The *Image*, in which Each Thing is ſeen: The *Light*, by which that Image appears. So He is both the *Teſtimony* and the *Witneſſe*. *He* is the *Faithfull witneſſe*: For He is the Truth of all things. Every thing is ſeen in Him, according to its moſt Right, moſt Proper, and Solideſt Appearance.

2. *The Preſence of Chriſt in all. The firſt-born from the dead.* v. 5. c. 1. Our Lord Jeſus was in Nature, ſo He became capable of dying, He ſinks himſelfe out of Nature into The Darkneſſe, which is a Shadow flying round about this Creation, ſo He dyes. Thorow this Darkneſſe he ſhoots forth himſelfe into the Light of God, which encompaſſeth all: So He is riſen from the dead.

By His Preſence in Nature, all things put forth themſelves there: For *all ſubſiſt in him. Coloſ.* 1. 17. By His Death all things die, His Death being the Vniverſal one, including and bringing forth all Particular deaths. For the world is crucified by the Croſſe of Chriſt. By His Reſurrection all things are raiſed into the Life of God; as the Soul raiſeth all the parts of the Body, making to it ſelfe ſo many ſeverall Reſurrections in them. Thus is Chriſt the *Firſt-born from the Dead. This* is He, Preſent in All Things, Paſſing thorow All States.

3. *Power over all: The Prince of the Kings of the earth*, c. 1. v. 5. All Principalities and Powers, viſible or inviſible, are ſtreames in which Jeſus Chriſt flowes forth from God, pouring forth himſelfe at laſt into God

God againe. So have we gone thorow the Prayer in the Salutation, as it containes a Three-fold Deſcription of our Saviours High and Heavenly Perſon.

2. *Praiſe.* This ſecond part of the Salutation which raiſeth it ſelfe, by a quick ſweetneſſe of change, unto Praiſe, is comprehended in the latter part of the fifth verſe and the ſixth. The Praiſes ſing forth the Perſon of Chriſt in a Two-fold Deſcription: Firſt *Love*: Secondly *Luſtre*.

1. *Love*. This Love of our Sweet Saviour hath a double Precioufneſſe in it.

1. *The Affection. To him that hath loved.* v. 5.

2. *The Effect*. This is Three-fold. 1. Our Juſtification, *And hath waſh't us in his blood.* 2. Sanctification, *Hath made us Prieſts to God his Father.* 3. Glorification, *Hath made us Kings.*

2. *Luſtre. To him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. Glory* is the Reflexion of Beauty from every Appearance. *Dominion* is the Power or Fulneſſe that comprehends and ſends forth each Appearance. This is the Luſtre of our Saviours Divine Perſon. 'Tis ſet with the *Roots* and Rags of all Being. It hath in it ſelfe the *Power* that puts forth any Appearance; the *Appearance* that is put forth by any Power, thorow the whole extent of things, from one end of them to the other, *for ever and ever.*

Saint *Iohn* from theſe *Praiſes* paſſeth as by a divine Rapture of delight and wonder into the Firſt *Preface*, v. 7. *Behold He comes*, &c. Let All eyes here look up and gaze, *He comes:* He who is, who was, who is to come; He, the Living Creature, and the Wheel

2. *Part. Pref.*

Wheel of the whole Creation of God: *He comes with Clouds*, He comes cloth'd with ſo full appearance of Majeſty and Sweetneſſe, as ſhall melt all hearts, make all eyes weep teares of *Griefe* and *Joy*; *Grief*, that they have ſeen Him no ſooner; *Joy*, that they ſee him now; and ſeeing him, ſee all their Griefs and Feares eternally vaniſh't; all their deſires and joyes accompliſh't; all their Sinnes againſt ſo much Sweetneſſe perfectly forgiven. Thus we are arrived at my Text.

TEXT.

THe Text is a Propheſie of that Divine Trinity, *Light*, *Love*, and *Joy*, which ſhall Vnitedly & Vniverſally reign in all hearts and eyes, at the Second Appearance of this Royall Spouſe of Spirits. You will ſee this Text though it ſpeak of Wounds, Mourning, Teares, to have a ſweet, not ſad ſence in all theſe; if we compare it with that place of the Prophet, from whence theſe words ſeem in great part to be borrowed, *Zach.* 12. 10. *I will pour forth a Spirit of Grace and ſupplications, &c.*

The Text hath Four Parts. 1. *A Shout.* 2. *A Show.* 3. *Spectators.* 4. *Their Paſſions.*

1. *The Shout, Behold.* This is as a Blaſt of a Trumpet, giving a loud and chearfull warning of ſome Glorious Show already begun; 'tis an *Excitation* with a *ſignification* of ſome *Eminent* and *Preſent thing.*

2. *The Show. He Comes with Clouds. He comes.* This word in Greek ſignifies a Preſent and Continued act, then begun, from that time extending it ſelfe to our dayes

dayes, to the end of Time: *He is Comming.* He comes *with Clouds*: I ſhall leave theſe *Clouds* upon my Text, untill I come to my Doctrine, then I ſhall open them.

3. *The Spectators.* The whole world is the Theater, or Stage, on which this *Show* is preſented. All orders of Spirits are the *Spectators*: *Every eye ſhall ſee him: They alſo that have Pierced him.* This clauſe hath a peculiar relation to the Jewes; 'Tis alſo a Hint of that Depth in which Divine Love hath laid it's Deſigne, to ſpring the Higheſt Sweetneſſe upon the moſt Horrid Sinners. 'Tis a melting Touch, like that, *Go, tell his Diſciples, and Peter; that he is riſen*: *Mark*, 16. 7. Or like that, *Hee appeared firſt to Mary Magdelen, out of whom he had caſt ſeven Devils. Mark* 16. 9.

4. *Paſſion.* And *they ſhall mourn over Him.* The Sight pierceth the Hearts of the Spectators. As Two Principles: Water and Blood ran mixt from the ſide of Chriſt, ſo Three ſorts of Teares flow mingled down the cheeks of the Beholders here; Teares of *Remorſe*, *Love*, and *Joy*: Teares of *Remorſe*, for having hated Love, ſtain'd Glory, murthered Life it ſelfe, upon a Miſtake; And all this, Their Own Love, Glory, Life: Teares of *Love* towards Beauty and Sweetneſſe, an Univerſal Beauty, an Vnlimited Sweetneſſe, united in one *Jeſus*, like Light and Heat in one Beame, and breaking forth from His Face to make a True Day: Teares of *Joy*, for that Bleſſednеſſe which appeares extending it ſelfe ſecurely to Eternity, in the Incomprehenſible Majeſty of our Saviour's Perſon, which hath Immortality, which comprehends Eternity in it ſelfe: in which the Quickeſt Sight is loſt in an Vnfathom'd Light.

Doctrine.

THe words of my Text being thus opened, doe again wrap up their full ſenſe in this Doctrine:

The Eminent Thing of the World, is *The Comming of our Lord Jeſus into the world.*

This Doctrine empties it Selfe by theſe Four Heades.

1. *The Comming of Chriſt.*
2. *The Clouds in which He Comes.*
3. *The Clearneſſe of His Appearance when He is come.*
4. *The Sweetneſſe Flowing from His Preſence.*

1. *Head.*

1. Head. *The Comming of Chriſt.* This is Two-fold; The 1ſt. The 2d. *Comming:*

1. The *Firſt Comming* of our Lord Jeſus is *Carnall.* This was then, when he took Fleſh of the Virgin *Mary.* Now He was made Inferiour to Angels, *Hebr.* 2. 9. Now he was made Fleſh, *Iohn* 1. 14. Now he was laid ſo low, as to be capable of all the Temptations, the moſt bitter, the moſt baleſull, that can come from Devils, or fall on Man; yet without ſinne: *Hebr.* 4. 14. This Firſt Comming was our Saviour's *Humiliation*, to Frailty, Guilt, Shame, Horrour, Death. The Myſtery now was, The Higheſt God making Himſelfe the Loweſt of Things, Fleſh, Duſt, The Deepeſt Darkneſſe. Thus the Firſt was the Laſt.

2 The

2. The *Second Comming* of our Saviour is *Spirituall*. It is Spirituall in Two Reſpects:

1. *His Perſon.*
2. *His Appearance.*

1. *Perſon.* The *Perſon* of our Bleſſed Saviour in his Second Comming is altogether *Spirituall* and Divine. Such as the Perſon of our Jeſus was at His Aſcenſion, ſuch is it in His Second Approach to Men. What is that Perſon in which our Saviour ſits at the Top of His Aſcent? You ſhall read, *Eph.* 4. 10. *He that Deſcended is the ſame, that Aſcended farre above All Heavens.* This Aſcent doth not ſo much import a *Change* of *Place*, as of *Perſon* and Proportion. When the Lord Jeſus was gone up above theſe Heavens, which we ſee, then He was above all Change of Place. The Heavens, which we do not ſee; the Inviſible Part of this Creation is fetter'd with the Chaine of Time, but not impriſon'd too by a Confinement or Circumſcription of Place. Our Lord aſcended, not ſo much by a *Locall Motion*, as a *Spirituall Mutation*, and Exaltation of His Perſon. As Earth heightned unto a Flame, changeth not its Place onely, but Forme and Figure: So the Perſon of our Saviour was raiſed to a Greatneſſe, a Glory vaſtly differing from, and ſurmounting Any Image, All Images of Things viſible or inviſible in this Creation. So 'tis fitly expreſt, *Hebr.* 7. 29. *He was made Higher than the Heavens.* He was Heigthned to a Splendour, Enlarged to a Capacity and Compaſſe above the Brighteſt, beyond the Wideſt Heavens.

Thus we ſee *Negatively*, what the State of our Savi-

our's Perſon was, when He was once Aſcended. It was no more Like to any thing in Earth below, or Heaven above: It was Remote from All Created Formes of Things, Tranſcending All: *Farre above All Heavens.*

Our Saviour Himſelf wil teach us, what the *Poſitive* State of His Perſon now was, by his Prayer for it: *Iohn* 17. 5. *And now, O Father, glorifie me with Thy Selfe, with that Glory, which I had with Thee before the World was.* Our Lord prayes, (and His Prayer is both a Propheſie, and the Performance begun) that His Divine Nature may be both the Center and Circle to His Humanity, inwardly enlivening, outwardly clothing and faſhioning it; that his Man-hood may be after his Death, at His Aſcenſion, in that ſame Image, and Appearance, in which the God-head was to it ſelfe, before any thing elſe was.

Saint *Paul* points out to us that, as Perfect, which our Saviour prayes for: *Coloſ.* 2. 9. *In whom the Fulneſſe of the God-head dwels Bodily.* The whole Man-hood of Chriſt, Body, as well as Soule, was ſo farre enlarged, ſo farre Spiritualized, as to take in, and hold forth the God-head Fully. It was heightned to *Both*, the *Fulneſſe* and *Forme* of God.

But, we muſt take heed, that we doe not miſunderſtand this, andwhile we ſtrive to have a Diſtinct View of our Saviour in Glory, confound Him, and our Selves. To this purpoſe we muſt uſe the help of a Two-fold Diſtinction:

2. *Diſtinct.* The Perſon of our Saviour is exalted to this Glory, not by the *Annihilation* or *Swallowing up* of the Humanity into the Divinity: but by the *Union* and *Communion* of Both Natures in One Perſon. Nei-

Neither doth this Glory come upon our Head and Husband, by a *Confuſion* of God and Man, the Creator and the Creature; but by a Free *Complyance* of God with Man, a Full *Conformity* of Man to God, the Creature to the Creator. The Glorification of the Humanity by the Divinity is no *Confuſion*, but a *Communion*; no *Annihilation*, but a *Transfiguration*. 2. *Diſtinct.*

Such was the Perſon of our Saviour at His Aſcenſion; Such is He, when againe He Deſcends upon us, at His Second Comming. So Himſelfe witneſſeth, *Mark* 8. 38. *When He Commeth in the Glory of His Father.* The Angel ſo fore-told the God-like manner of our Saviour, Comming the Second Time, *Act.* 1. 11. *This ſame Jeſus, which ye ſee taken up from you into Heaven, ſhall ſo come, as ye have ſeene Him goe into Heaven.* Behold, how your Maſter aſcends, and as he aſcends, he puts off his Earthly Appearance, growes Inviſible, and vaniſhes into the Glory of God: So, in the ſame Divine manner, in the ſame Glory, Inviſible to Mortall Eyes, He ſhall come againe to you. Such, as He is now, at His Entrance into Heaven; ſuch ſhall He be at his Re-entrance into the World.

Chriſt at his Firſt Comming was a God in the forme of an Earthly Man, of a Worme, the Loweſt of Men: at his Second Comming He is a Man, a Worme, the loweſt of Men in the Forme of God. And now the Laſt is Firſt.

This is the Spirituality of our Saviour's Comming in the Firſt Reſpect, in *His Perſon*.

2. *Appearance.* Our Lord comes the Second Time into the World, not ſo much by *Change of Place*, as of *Appearance*. *Epheſ.* 1. 10. Saint *Paul* ſpeaks of he Father and of Chriſt, *That in the Diſpenſation of the Fulneſſe of Time, he might gather together in One, All Things in Chriſt, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth, even in Him.* The Diſpenſation of the Fulneſſe of Time, is the Diſcovery of *Eternity*, which gathers up into One undivided State, All Times, Paſt, Preſent, To Come; and is therefore called the *Fulneſſe of Time*, which is the Shadow to this Body. This Diſpenſation began at Chriſt's Aſcenſion, and was then perfected in *His Perſon.* Now was our Lord fully Glorified. Now He ſaw All Things in the Beatificall Viſion, in the God-head, after a manner, as unchangeable, as God. Nothing paſſed away, nothing was to Come. From the Heighth of Heaven above, to the Depth of the Earth, and the Creature below, He poſſeſſeth All Things, in One Glory, even in Himſelfe. To Him then there is now no more Roome for Aſcent, or Deſcent, for Change of Time or Place. What then is His Second Comming? 'Tis His Shining forth upon the reſt of the Creatures; that, as He comprehends Himſelfe and All Things in God: So They may comprehend All Things, and Themſelves in Him. Our Saviour ſpeaks this plainly, *Mat.* 24. 27. *For as the Lightning commeth out of the Eaſt, and ſhineth unto the Weſt, even ſo ſhall alſo the Comming of the Son of Man be.*

Saint *Paul* cals it an *Appearance*, *Coloſ.* 3. 4. *Your Life is hid with Chriſt in God: When Chriſt, who is our Life, ſhall appeare, then ſhall we appeare with Him in Glo-*

Glory. The Perſon of Chriſt is taken into the Glory of God. This is inviſible, not to it ſelfe, nor any thing like it ſelfe, but to Eyes of Fleſh. Thus Our Saviour is Hid, as God is, by the Greatneſſe of the Glory. In His Second Comming, He is as the Brightneſſe of the God-head breaking forth upon the World; diſcovering it ſelf, as a New Root of Immortality below the Natural Root of each Creature; and clothing upon each Appearance with a New Appearance of Glory. Thus the Comming of Chriſt is an Enlargement of Himſelfe from the ſame Center, yet not to Himſelf, but others.

So Saint *Paul* calls this Comming, *A Revelation from Heaven*, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7. *And to you, who are troubled, reſt with us, when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven.* In this ſenſe Saint *Peter* ſpeakes, *Act.* 3. 20, 21. *And He ſhall ſend Jeſus Chriſt, &c. whom the Heavens muſt receive, till the reſtitution of All Things.* When our Lord Aſcended, He was raiſed above all Heavens into God; from thence immediately He goes on ſhining forth, and diſpenſing the Glory of God through the Heavens, the Inviſible part of this Creation, Angells and Spirits of Men. Within this Limit He containes his Beames till the Laſt Day. Then He ſhall Enlarge His Circuite to take in the Viſible and Bodily Part of Things, when They alſo ſhall be Reſtored, and Returne into that Glory, and Divinity, out of which They fell.

There is One Thing more to be obſerved, before we paſſe from this Head. *The Sceond Comming of Chriſt is Graduall.* As the Sun, when it is gone from us to the

the utmoſt Point of Heaven South-ward, immediately Returnes: So our Saviour began His Comming again into the World at His Aſcenſion, ſo ſoone, as He had reach't the furtheſt Point of Diſtance from the Creature, in the Heigths of the Creatour. We reade *Heb.* 1. 6. *And again, when He bringeth His Firſt-begotten Son into the World, He ſaith; Let all the Angells of God Worſhip Him.* Thus it is read in the Engliſh Tranſlation. But, as a late Learned Critick hath obſerved, it runs Thus in the Greek: *When He* (that is, the Father) *bringeth His Firſt-begotten Sonne againe into the World*, &c. This place thus read, manifeſtly joynes together the Aſcention of our Lord, and His Comming the Second time into the World. For when was it that Proclamation was made among the Angels to Worſhip Jeſus Chriſt? Was it not then, when He Aſcended, and ſate downe at the Right Hand of God? So it is cleerly ſeene *Philip.* 2. 9*t* 10. *Wherefore God alſo hath Highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name above every Name; That at the Name of* Jeſus *every Knee ſhould bow.* So ſoone as our King is entred into the Divine Glory, and hath there received the Ointment of the God-head, immediately He comes forth, and begins to ſhew Himſelfe in a Progreſſe of Glory thorow the Creatures, to receive their Fealty and Homage.

Revel. 6. 2. The Coronation of Chriſt, and his Comming forth in a Spirituall Beauty are conjoyn'd by Saint *John*, who there begins his Prophetick Story, and makes this the opening of the Firſt Seale on the Booke, *I ſaw, and behold a White Horſe, and He that ſate on Him had a Bow, and a Crowne was given Him,*

Him, and He went forth Conquering and to Conquer. The Booke is the Image of God, the Seven Seales the Naturall Formes of Things. The Opening of the Seales by the Lamb, His Comming forth in the Spirit.

I will finiſh this Head with that place of Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 15. 45. *The Firſt Man Adam was made a Living Soule: the Laſt Man was made a Quickning Spirit.* Our Bleſſed Lord in his Second Appearance comes into the World, as a Soule comes downe into the Body. The Soule comes downe upon the Body, clothing it with a new Shape, Life, and Luſtre. So Jeſus Chriſt deſcends upon the World, to Comprehend, to Act it, to Appeare in it, to Gather it up into One Spirit of Beauty and Immortality, in Himſelfe.

So ſhall the Heavenly Man ſprout forth thorough the Earth, as an Vniverſall Paradiſe; ſending forth all Earthly Formes, as Revived Plants, by a New Growth, out of Himſelfe. Then ſhall All Without the Circle of this Spirituall Perſon, this Quickning Spirit be Death and Hell; a Hell for Dogs and Devils; each foule, falſe, and fiery Spirit.

I have now paſſed through the Firſt Head: *The Comming of Chriſt.*

2. *Head.*

The Clouds, in which Chriſt comes. Theſe *Clouds* 2. *Head.* are of Foure Sorts:

1. *Darkneſſe.*
2. *Tempeſts.*
3. *Worldly Changes.*
4. *Angels.*

1. *Clouds of Darkneſſe.* Clouds are uſed in This Senſe, as the Springs and Seats of Darkneſſe. So they furniſh out and ſet off the Comming of Chriſt as God, into the World. *Pſal.* 97. 2. *Clouds and Darkneſſe are round about Him.*

A Two-fold Darkneſſe ſurrounds our Saviours Perſon, as He ſlides downe in a Glory upon the Earth.

1. *From His owne Will.*
2. *From the World.*

1. *Darkneſſe, From His owne Will. David* in the 18. Pſalme is confeſt by All, to ſpeak of His owne Deliverances *Literally*, but of Chriſts Laſt Comming *Myſtically* and *Prophetically: ver.* 11. *He made Darkneſſe His Secret Place: His Pavilion round about Him were Dark Waters, Thick Clouds of the Sky.* The Prince in the Poet wrapt about with a Thick and Darke Ayre, entred into Carthage, paſſed thorow the Court into the preſence of the Queene, there ſtood in the midſt of them unperceived, while they ſpeak of Him, as abſent, Lament him as loſt; till the Fire purified it ſelfe into a Clearneſſe. So the Great Prince of Peace and Spirits, as He comes forth, caſts a Cloud about Him; ſo He comes on upon us; ſo He encompaſſeth us, is ſtill in Motion. Yet ſtill we ſpeak of Him, as far above and beyond the Starry Sky, and of His Comming, as at a Great Diſtance. But, Behold! He is already in the midſt of us; He breaks forth on our Right hand, and on our Left, like a Flame, round about us; and we perceive Him not.

2. *Dark-*

2. *Darkneſſe, From the World.* 1 *Theſ.* 5. 2. *The Day of the Lord commeth as a Thiefe in the Night.* 'Tis the interpoſal of the Earth's ſhadow between the Sunne and our Eyes, that makes Night. The Devill benights Man-kind, by interpoſing this ſhadowie world betweene their Saviour and their Soules. In this Night he rocks them into a Sleep, by a perpetuall Motion of vanities. In this Sleep he deludes them with Dreames of Reaſon, Counterfeit Images of Truth. Now in this Night, Sleep, and Dreame the Day of Chriſt's appearance, appeares not, but as a Fancy or Dotage. All things ſeem to continue as they were from the Beginning. Where, ſay they, is the Promiſe of His Comming? They diſcerne no Dawning of it.

All the Powers and Spirits of Darkneſſe hate the Light; and Chriſt, becauſe He comes as the Light, to *increaſe* and *inflame* their Darkneſſe. They therefore Strive to raiſe Miſts upon this Riſing Glory, that they may ſtain it, if they cannot ſtop its Courſe. So the Progreſſe of Chriſt is to the greateſt part of Men, like the Motion of the Sunne in a Winter day, when 'tis hard to perceive the Day-break, or diſtinguiſh between Day and Night. This is the Firſt ſort of *Clouds, Dark Ones.*

2. *Clouds of Tempeſts.* Clouds are the Womb in which Tempeſts are bred, and the Cradle in which they are rock't. No Painter, no Poet, no Writer Holy or Profane hath any thing any where ſo Direfull, ſo Tragicall, as is the Deſcription of our Saviours ſecond Comming in the Scriptures. Can you caſt your eye on the eighteenth *Pſalm* and not tremble? when you ſee there,

the Earth Shaking and Trembling: v. 7. a Fire Devouring v. 8. The Heavens bowing Down-ward: v. 9. Thick Clouds darkning the Sky; Thunders, Lightnings, Hail-ſtones flying through the Ayre; The Foundations of the world below diſcover'd. v. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Thus the Mighry God, our Jeſus deſcends.

Again, *Pſa*: 97. Hils Melting, The Earth Trembling, Lightnings flaſhing thorow the Ayre, and being its onely Light, Dark Clouds environing all: This is the Scene of Things; This the State in which Chriſt comes forth.

Behold *Habakkuk* with quivering Lips, trembling joynts, bones mouldring into duſt, when he had onely a Prophetick Repreſentation of our Saviours ſecond Appearance. All the Dreadfull things that attended the Preſence of God, in Ægypt, at the Red Sea, on Mount Sinai, thorow the wilderneſſe, are made but Types, but ſhadows of this Terrible March of the Capteine of the Lords Hoſts, Chriſt in the Spirit, thorow all Fleſh. *Habak*. 3.

A wiſe Jew was wont to ſay from a Deep fore-ſight of the Blackneſſe of this Day: *The Meſſias will come, but Lord let not me live to ſee His Comming.*

The Comming of our Saviour in the Spirit, is for the Full Diſſolution of all Fleſh. 'Tis no wonder then if every ſtep he takes, as he comes along, ſtrike earthquakes, peſtilences, warres, deſolations thorow the Earth. This is the ſecond ſort of *Cloudes, Tempeſtuous Ones.*

3. *Clouds of Worldly Changes.* The Fineſt Piece of this Creation, Naturall Fleſh of Chriſt Himſelf, is cal'd, A Vail.

A Vail, *Heb.* 10. 11. *A Living way through the vail his Fleſh.* Well may we then call all other Fleſhly Things, Vailes and Clouds, *Gen.* 1. 2. The Creation in its firſt Principles is Figured out to us, as a Dark and Deep Sea. Each particular Creature is as a Cloud raiſed out of this Sea of Darkneſſe, over-caſt with Light and Images. When the Temple was finiſh't, which was an Earthly Palace ſhadowing out Heaven, fil'd with all Excellencyes, as Pictures of Heavenly Glories; then *Solomon* ſaith to God, 1 *Kin.* 8. 12. *Thou dwelleſt in Thick Darkneſſe:* Signifying, that the Brighteſt Beauties of Nature are True Clouds.

In the midſt of this Darkneſſe our Saviour paſſeth on; upon the backs of theſe Clouds he comes riding along. Behind the viſible Formes of things He hides Himſelfe, and ſteales in upon us ere we be aware. All Their Motions are His Approaches. *Mat.* 24. The Diſciples ask their Maſter, What ſhould be the ſignes of His Comming? He relates by way of Propheſie the whole ſtory of the World, Publike in Nations, Particular in Families, Private in ſingle Perſons, From His death, to that of the whole World: And ſo He anſwers their Queſtion, teaching them, that as all Creatures are the *Print* of his Feet, ſo their whole Conduct is the *Motion* of His Feet, Their *Commotions* His *Commings on* upon them.

As the Whale moveth himſelfe under the Waters, the Billows riſe and rowl, the Deep boyles like a Pot. Before our Saviour's time *Lucifer* was the *Leviathan*, that made the Sea to ſeeth about him, like a Pot of Ointment. Now our Lord Jeſus ſports Himſelfe in theſe Waters. He makes his way under them, and as he

moves, The Deepes of Mens Spirits, Counſailes, Common-wealths, boyle, the whole Frame of Things reel and rowl themſelves into violent Concuſſions, like Waves of the Sea.

This is the third ſort of Clouds, *Rowling Ones.*

4. *Cloudes of Angels,* My Text ſaith, *Chriſt comes with Cloudes.* Saint *Paul* ſaith, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7. *The Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his Mighty Angels.* Our Lord Jeſus tels us, *Mat.* 26. 64. *Hereafter ſhall ye ſee the Son of Man ſitting at the Right Hand of Power, and comming in the Clouds of Heaven.* He ſpeakes of the ſame thing, *Mark* 8. 50. In this Phraſe; *When He commeth in the Glory of his Father, with the Holy Angels.* Theſe Parallel places make thoſe expreſſions ſeem Parallel: Angels, Cloudes.

The Prophet diſcourſeth of all ſorts of Meteors, *Pſa.* 104. 3,4. *The upper Waters, Clouds, Winds, Spirits*, or Blaſts, *Flames of Fire.* This is interpreted expreſly of Angels, *Heb.* 1. 7. *And of Angels He ſaith, He hath made His Angels Spirits, His Miniſters a Flame of Fire.* Theſe are the Waters in which the Chambers of God are; the Clouds which are His Chariot; the Winged Windes, on which He rides; the Flames, in which He Comes.

Saint *Paul* joynes theſe Two, *Angels* and *Flames*, at the Comming of Chriſt, 2 *Theſ.* 1, 7, 8. *The Lord ſhall be revealed from Heaven, with His Mighty Angels, And with Flaming Fire.* The Flame of Fire is Heat working it ſelfe into Light. This is the Immediate Image and Inſtrument of Angels in this viſible World, thorow this

this they appeare and work. All the Appearances of God under the Law were by Angels. All the Appearances of Angels were by Flames, or Light. The Angel went up from *Manoah* in a Flame: *Jud.* 30. 20. He appeared to *Moſes* in a Flame: *Exod.* 3. 2. The Angels came downe upon the ſacrifices in a Flame. The Lord Jeſus ſhall come in a Flame of Angels.

The Glory of God in Chriſt, as he comes the ſecond time, breaks forth upon the Angels. In theſe He Flames out upon the Bodily Part of Things, as Fire diſſolving them in their own ſhapes, and reſolving and raiſing them into Angelicall Formes. Theſe are the Heavenly Flames of Glory, in which Saints are Bleſſed; the Fire of Hell, in which Evill men are tormented; Angelicall Forms.

In this ſenſe Jeſus Chriſt tels us, *Luke* 17. 22. that *Lazarus* being dead, was carryed by Angels into *Abraham's* Boſome. That Glory of God, which is cal'd *Abraham's* Boſome, (a Type of the Fathers Boſome,) was revealed in the Angels, in them it over-ſhadowed *Lazarus*, withdrawing Him out of this Preſent State, and gathering Him up unto theſe Spirits, which are the Fathers of the Earthly Man.

Accordingly we read, *Mark* 13. 27. *He ſhall ſend forth His Angels, and gather His Elect from the Four Windes.* This ſhall be the Reſurrectin of the Body, when this viſible Image and life, which was as wind, breath'd forth by God from the Boſome of thoſe Angelicall Flames, ſhall by their opening themſelves upon it, be again taken in to God, in theſe Spiritual Chambers.

In the ſame ſence Angels are called the Chariots of God: *Pſa.* 68. 17. *The Chariots of the Lord are Twenty Thou-*

Thouſand, even Thouſands of Angels. The ſecond Comming of Chriſt is not on Foot, as a Servant: The Image of the Firſt *Adam* in a viſible ſhape. 'Tis as of a Prince in his chariot; The Image of God in the Angelical Being. *Cant.* 3. 8. *Solomons* Chariot *had Pillars of ſilver, Covering of Purple, Bottome Gold, in the mid'ſt, Love, for the Daughters of Hieruſalem.* Divine Glory the Foundation, Divine Love the Center in that Foundation; Pillars of Silver, Angelicall Beauties and ſtrengths; the Covering of Purple, the Glorious Humanity of Chriſt in Royall State Comprehending all. This is the Chariot which the Lord Jeſus hath prepared for His Spouſe. This is the Forme in which He rides forth at his ſecond Comming thorow the Whole Creation, taking up to Him the Daughters of Hieruſalem, both in Soul and Body, at their ſeverall Seaſons.

As Angels are the *Chariots* of Fire, in which the Lord rides forth the ſecond Time: So are they the *Horſes* of Fire on which He rides. *Revel.* 6. As the Seales are opened, A *Man* comes forth on *Horſe-back*, The *Man* is the Image of God, the Lord Jeſus, who comes forth in every various forme, as in a ſeverall Dreſſe for ſeveral Deſignes. The *Horſe* is the Particular Forme of Inviſible Glory, the Angel on which He is Mounted.

I will make an end of this Diſcourſe with that Place, *Mark* 8. 1. Where Chriſt ſpeaking of his Comming, joynes theſe Two, the *Glory of the Father* and the *Holy Angels:* As the *Man* on the *Horſe*, He ſhall come in the Glory of His Father, and the Holy Angels. In our Saviour's Perſon, as He comes in the Spirit, the Glory of the God-head ſhal be, as a *Sea*; the Angelicall Glories, as *Ships* on this *Sea*: All Formes of Things in this viſible

ble State, ſhall be taken off the Earth of their own Groſſe and Dul Principles, into theſe Myſterious *Ships*, in which they ſhall be carried on ſtill further and further into the Ocean of the God-head.

I have now deſcrib'd thoſe *Clouds* in which Chriſt comes, which was the ſecond Head.

3. *Head.*

The clearneſſe of Chriſts Appearance. Every Eye ſhall ſee Him. There is a Two-fold Eye, 3. *Head.*

1ſt. The *Inward.*
2. The *Outward Eye.*

1ſt. *The Inward Eye* ſhall ſee Chriſt. Saint *Paul* ſpeaks of this, *Epheſ.* 1. 18. *The Eye of your underſtanding being Enlightened.* The Eye of the underſtanding is the *Inward Eye.* This alſo is Two-fold.

1ſt. *A Naturall.*
2. *A Divine Eye.*

The *Naturall Eye* is that of Reaſon, which is alwayes open in all Men, ſo farre as they are Men. *The Divine Eye* is for many yeares, many ages, quite ſhut up in the Soul ever ſince the Creation, untill the Regeneration.

This Eye is a *Divine Principle or Faculty* of ſeeing Things; the *Supreame Power* of Knowing, as God Knows and is Known. Saint *Iohn* ſpeaks of this Eye, 1 *Iohn*, 3. 2. *When He appeares, we ſhall be like Him, For we ſhall ſee Him as He is.* The Proper Light and Object of This Eye is Jeſus Chriſt in the Spirit,

as He is the Brightneſſe and Image of the God-head.

As a Sun-beame beating with a ſtrong Light upon the Naturall Eye; So ſhall the Lord Jeſus awaken this Eye in Man, by ſetting Himſelfe in it. And now how cleer, how ſweet, how ſatisfactory muſt this ſight be? 'Tis a *Fit Union* of an *Object Suitable* to *a Proportion'd Power* or Faculty, that gives Satisfaction and Certainty. Here the *Divine Eye* is the Faculty, the *Supreame Image* is the Object, the Vnion is the *Spirit of Unity*. Each Image, each Eye, each Sight is not ſo much as a Dream, Shadow, Glance to This, where the Eye of Heaven, and the Beauty of Heaven poſſeſſe each other in One Spirit.

2. *The Outward Eye* ſhall ſee Chriſt. Now the Inward Powers of the Soul are unrighteouſly detain'd, as by an Impriſonment, or Buriall in the Exterior Senſes. But when Chriſt comes, the Outward Man with His Faculties and Senſes ſhall be taken in by the Intellectuall and Spirituall Man, as the Tabernacle was into the Temple. So Both ſhall ſee the ſame Glory, by the ſame Light.

Saint *Paul* tels us, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 16. *The Lord Himſelf ſhall deſcend with a Shout, with the voyce of an Arch-Angel, with the Trump of God.* The Lord Jeſus ſhall fill the Angels with the Diſcoveries of the God-head, as Trumpets with a Loud Blaſt, or Triumphant Flouriſh. Thorow them this Double noiſe, the Shout of Divine Appearances, the Voice of Angelicall Gloryes, ſhall come ruſhing like a Mighty Wind upon the Dead Saints, and awaken their Bodyes into the ſame Harmony, as they had done before, their ſouls. So Both ſhall be a *Treaſure of Divinity* in an *Angels veſſell.*

To

To this agrees that of Jeſus Chriſt: *Mark* 12. 25. *They ſhall be as the Angels in Heaven*: Speaking of the Reſurrection, which is the Comming of Chriſt to the Body. Then ſhall our Bodyes be in our Soules, as a *Leſſe Angel in a Greater.* Chriſt as He comes transfigures Both into Angelicall ſhapes, ſo pours forth Himſelfe into Both, and Both enjoy the Clearneſſe of His Appearance.

4. *Head.*

The Sweetneſſe that flowes from Chriſts Appearance. 4. *Head.*
And all the Tribes of the Earth ſhall mourn over Him.
Sweet Teares upon a Sweet Subject! Chriſt, when he ſhines out, pierceth the Hearts of Men with the Golden-headed Arrow of Love, and Loving Griefe, by a *Four-fold Diſcovery.*

1ſt. *Of the Eternall Relation* between Chriſt and the Soul. *Chriſt comes and All the Saints with Thee. Hoſ.* 4. 5. When Thou appeareſt, then thou Diſcovereſt All *His Saints in Thine Hand*, in thine Heart, *Deut.* 33. 3. Thou ſheweſt thy ſelfe, O King of Saints, as the Everlaſting Father, the Father which hath ſent forth All Generations from the mid'ſt of his own Tender Bowels. This is the Firſt Diſcovery.

2. *Of the Eternall Affection* in Chriſt to the Soul. Divines ſay, that the wounds ſhall appeare in the Glorified Body of Chriſt, when He Appeares. 'Tis true, that he opens His Boſome, and ſhewes thoſe Wounds of Love which he had there from Eternity; and thoſe Wounds too, which He received on the Croſſe, as they are Glorifyed in His Eternall Love.

3. *Of the Emptyneſſe and Eternall loſſe* of thoſe Things, for which we undervalued our Saviour.

4. *Of the exceſſe and Eternity of Glory*, which we ſhall ſee comming forth upon us in the Perſon of Chriſt.

As at the Diſcovery of Ioſeph, He and his Brethren fell upon the Neck of each other and wept: So will this Diſcovery in the Appearances of Chriſt, bring a ſweet Confuſion upon the Spirits of Men: Then ſhall a Man fall at the feet of His Saviour, and weeping ſay, *O my Jeſus! Thou art my Father, Brother, Huſband, Selfe. While there were other Things, I loved other Things more than Thee. Now they are Everlaſtingly gone, and have left me alone: Yet now thou owneſt me. See, as thou breakeſt forth, thou drowneſt my ſins and me in a Flood of Glory in thy Selfe. O my Jeſus! Thou breakeſt my Heart.*

I have now paſſ'd thorow the Doctrinall Part of the Point, diſtinguiſh'd into Foure Heads.

The Application.

1. *For Humiliation.* I ſhall firſt preſent you with a *Preparative*, to the Vſe, and then put into your Hands the *Uſe* it ſelfe.

1. *The Preparative.* Worthy Patriots, I ſhall humbly undertake to be a Remembrancer to your Piety and Prudence in a Two-fold Conſideration, for a Preparative.

1. *Conſid.* *The Firſt Conſideration is* this: 'Tis now many

ny years ſince our *Faſts* and our *Fights* have been mutually interwoven. Yet, what Profit have we of the One? what Peace from the Other? what end of either? Still we *faſt*, ſtill we *fight*, if not in Camps, yet more dangerouſly in Counſailes. Our ſhip is fil'd with waves, more ſtill preſſing in, ready to ſink it: So that we may cry, *O God! careſt thou not, that we periſh in the mid'ſt of all our Prayres, Praiſes, Faſts, and Holy Feaſts?*

Now you are met againe to faſt and pray: Now put on your Tendereſt Bowels of pity and affection. So look upon this poore Kingdome, which hath wrapt up in it your Countreymen, your Kinred, all your Deareſt and ſweeteſt Relations: Nay, that which to you ſure ſhould be, more than all Theſe; the Glory of your God. See it trembling and hovering between A *Heaven of Reformation*, all good Angels and Men ſtriving to raiſe it up thither, and *A Hell of Ruine*, the weight of all Devils, and bad Men hanging upon it, to ſinke it downe thither.

Let this ſight melt you, Let it move you to call up all your ſtrength this once; to cry mightily to God. Who Knows, what *this One Day* may do to Croſſe the feares, to Crown the hopes and toyle of many yeares, if it pleaſe the Eternall Spirit, to blow right and ſtrong upon your Spirits, *this One Day*.

Six dayes the Army of Iſrael compaſſed *Iericho*; yet ſtill It ſtood. On the ſeventh Day they compaſſed it ſeven Times; at the ſeventh Time, the Prieſts blew with the Trumpets, and the people gave a Mighty ſhout, and the walls of *Iericho* fell downe flat to the Ground. This is the *Firſt Conſideration*.

2. *Conſid.* *The ſecond Conſideration* is this. No teares prevaile with God, but ſuch as are wept over Jeſus Chriſt. *All the Tribes of the Earth ſhall mourn over Him.* If Jeſus Chriſt be not the Flame in our Breaſt, that melts our Hearts; if He be not the Object, that draws forth our Teares, though we weep Blood, our Blood will be, but as Water ſpilt upon the Ground.

If we grieve, and not *in* Chriſt, our Griefe is Hypocriſie, or at beſt but Formality. If we grieve, and not *for* Chriſt, our Griefe is Idolatry. What makes the Diſcourſes of men mutually underſtood and moving? 'Tis the union of Men in One Vniverſall Spirit of Reaſon. What makes Colours, Sounds underſtood and moving, in the Eye or Eare? 'Tis the union of Senſe and Senſible Things, in One Common Spirit or Principle of Senſe.

If you will touch the Heart of God with your Prayers and Sorrowes, it muſt be by a union between Him and you, in One Vniverſall, Common Perſon, the Lord Jeſus, God-Man.

Jacob obtained not the Bleſſing by Prayers and Tears alone. But as He prayed and wept, He held faſt in His Armes the Angel of the Covenant. Then ſhall the Day break upon us, and we become as Princes with God, when we pray, and with our Jeſus in our Armes; when we weepe upon the Boſome of our Jeſus.

If then you have any Senſe of the utmoſt good or ill of this Kingdome, firſt your *Parent*, now your *Foſter-child*: If you have any Senſe of your own Safeties, your Soules, your immortalitie, any thing; Send up a ſtrong and ſecret groane, which God may heare, and ſay within you: O! that the Lord Jeſus, that All-quickning Spirit would deſcend into our Spirits, and become a Spring

Spring of Divine ſorrowes there! Then ſhould our Teares be as His Blood. O! that the Lord Jeſus the Higheſt Image of Love and Beauty, the moſt profaned and perſecuted, would ſet Himſelfe before our eyes! Then ſhould we know, Why, and How to weep: then ſhould we weep indeed.

If our Dear Saviour would make his Arms our Croſſe, that we might from thence offer our Broken Hearts in Sacrifice to the Father; then would our God ſmell a ſweet Savour of Reſt in us, and at length give us Reſt in Himſelfe. This is *the ſecond Conſideration* in the Preparative.

2. The Vſe. This is A *Humiliation* from *a Three-fold Ground.*

1. *Inſenſibleneſſe in our Spirits of our Saviour's Approach.*
2. *Unſuitableneſſe in our Counſailes to the Courſe of His Comming.*
3. *Enmity in our Affections to the Intent of His Comming.*

1ſt. *Ground, Inſenſibleneſſe.* Is not the *Comming of Chriſt* that by which God deſignes to make Himſelfe Admired among His Saints? as Saint *Paul* teſtifies, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 10. *When He ſhall come to be Glorified in His Saints, and Admired, &c.* Is not this that at which All the Angels of God bow themſelves and worſhip? *Heb.* 1. 6. *When He bringeth His Firſt-begotten Againe into the world, He ſaith, Let All the Angels of God worſhip Him.* Is not this the Grand Wheel which moves All,

All, the Centrall Motion, which carries about Perſons, Kingdomes, the whole Creation? *Heb.* 1. 7. When Chriſt comes the ſecond Time, God *ſaith of the Angels, He hath made His Angels Spirits, His Miniſters a Flame of Fire.* All Angelicall or Elementary Inſtruments of Motion, are but His Miniſters, propagating His Motions thorow the world. Can This be thus, and we Ignorant or Inſenſible of This *Comming of Chriſt*, without the Higheſt ſinne againſt God, the Kingdome, our own ſafeties?

Let us then endeavour to apply this uſe to our ſelves more properly and powerfully, by a *Three-fold Enquiry* concerning this firſt Ground of Humiliation.

1. *Enquiry.* *Have we ſeen Jeſus Chriſt as he Comes among the Angels?* 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. Saint *Paul* tels us now, *This is the Greateſt Myſtery of Godlineſſe: God manifeſted in the Fleſh, juſtified in the Spirit, ſeen of Angels:* Behold! Jeſus Chriſt, as God puts forth Himſelfe in the Forme of Fleſh, of the Creature, and over-ſpreads that Form or Fleſh with the Glory and Spirit of the God-head. Thus He ſhines forth already upon the One Half of Things, the Inviſible Part: He already is riſen upon the Angels, as Starres, at once gathering them up into His Divine Light, and riding forth upon their Beames. So each Starre now carryes forth a Sun along with it: Each Angel, the Son of man and God.

Saint *Paul* tels us, *Coloſ.* 2. 10. *that Chriſt is the Head of All Principality and Power.* Our Lord Jeſus cloth'd with the Glory of His Father, hath united Himſelfe to the Acting Principles, and Ruling Powers of this Creation. Now He Flames forth thorow theſe inviſible Fires

Fires into all Courts, Campes, or Counſailes, into every Frame of things. Now He flyes abroad upon the Backs of theſe Cherubims, and the Wings of theſe Winds into the Breaſt of each Man, into the Boſome of each Creature.

We reade, *Coloſ.* 2. 15. *Having ſpoyled Principalities and Powers, He made a Shew of them Openly, Triumphing over Them.* See the Lord Jeſus binding Evill Spirits, the Powers of This world in ſtraiter Chaines of Darkneſſe, leading them Captives at the Taile of His Chariot, making them His Slaves, to Serve Him for Executioners, as the Mutes doe the Great Turke; to raine downe Snares, Tempeſts, Fire and Brimſtone on His Enemies.

Have you ſeene the Lord thus mounted on His Horſes of Fire? Like the Sun, like a Champion comming forth to run His Race from one end of Things to the Other? Are you come to this Mount Sion, where the Mediatour appears with God in the midſt of His innumerable Angels?

If you be Strangers to ſuch Sights, then Mourn. For you are yet at Mount Sinai in the midſt of Clouds and Stormes. You are ſtill in a Wilderneſſe full of Fiery Serpents, where every Step you take may be to a Death. As you Mourn, Pray: *Sweet Jeſus Shine; Sweet Jeſus Come thou, as the Day-ſpring from on High upon us; Change the Appearance, Open to us this New Frame of Angels Glories, covering the World like Clouds, and thy Glories raiſed on Theſe.*

Have you Seen the Lord Jeſus Comming in the Spirits of Men on Earth? This is the 2. Step of our

Saviour's Deſcent from the Boſome of the Father. We are taught, *Luke* 17. 20, 21. that, *The Kingdome of God commeth not with Obſervation. For the Kingdome of God is within You.* The Glory of the Father, in which Chriſt Comes, is the Kingdome of God. This is not obvious to Sence or Reaſon grounded upon Sence. For it comes not their way, from without. It bubbles up from an inward Spring, like Life. From within it Enlarges it Selfe, as Circles from the Center, the Out-moſt being Laſt.

This is the Method, by which our Saviour comes Spiritually into the world. *Firſt* the Godhead opens it Selfe upon the Humane Nature of Chriſt, making that the Firſt-fruits of the whole Creation. *Coloſ.* 1. 18. *Secondly*, the Lord Jeſus with this over-ſpreading Glory comes downe upon the Angels, making them, the Firſt-fruits of Spirits. The *Third* Step, which He takes, is through the Angels into the Souls of Mortall Men. In theſe He plants Himſelfe, as a Throne Circled in with the various Beauties of Angels, like the diverſe-Coloured Raine-bow, *Revel.* 4. 3. Thus theſe become the Firſt-fruits of Men, *Rom.* 8. 23. The *Fourth* Remove is upon the Bodies of the Saints, that they may be the Firſt-fruits of Bodies. The *Laſt* is the Paſſing of the Lord Jeſus from the Bodies of the Saints into the whole Frame of Viſible Things; as a Flame ſtill taking hold of Neighbouring Fuell, Still Catching and Infolding it ſelfe thorow All Things. By theſe Degrees the Lord Deſcends in Glorious State, and as He Deſcends, Transfigures all Things into the Same Glory.

The Comming of Chriſt is Compared to the *Day*,

1 *Theſ.*

1 *Theſ.* 5. 5. *Ye are Children of the Day.* And ſo 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. *Till the Day dawne.* The Lord Jeſus, as He riſeth like a Sun upon the World, firſt diffuſeth Himſelfe through the Skie of the Angelicall Nature: Then falls, as a Glory, upon the Tops of the Mountaines, the Higher Parts of the Earth, the Soules of Men: From thence He ſlides downe into Plaines and Lower Valleies, The Bodily Part of Things.

Unhappy He! That Sees not the Comming of Chriſt into His own Soul. What is it, which He Sees not? He Sees not the Sweetneſſe in His Saviour's Eyes; A *Forgiving*; A *Melting*; A *Molding*; A *Raviſhing* Sweetneſſe: A Sweetneſſe, that freely *Forgives* the blackeſt, and moſt Trecherous Hearts: A Sweetneſſe, that kindly *Melts*, the hardeſt and moſt untam'd Hearts: A Sweetneſſe, that gently *Molds* into a Spouſe-like frame, the rougheſt Hearts: A Sweetneſſe, that raviſheth the moſt deſpairing Hearts into an Extaſie of Supreame, immortall joyes.

Vnhappy he, that ſees not the comming of Chriſt into the ſoules of men! What is it, which He ſees not? He ſees not the Tabernacle of God among men; the Diſtance leſſening betweene Heaven and Earth; the Glory of the Godhead growing to a Fuller Tide, and winning upon the World, as the Sea eating in upon the Land. He cannot diſcerne the Times and their Changes, How, or Why they are; the Fatality of Perſons and Kingdomes, their Periods. For theſe Flouriſh and Fall, as they Fall in with, Fall off from, or Fall foule upon the Comming of Chriſt. He is the *Corner-ſtone*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 6. *Mat.* 21. 24. *Whoſoever ſhall fall on*

this ſtone, ſhall be broken : on whomſoever it ſhall fall, it ſhall grind him to powder.

Is it Day-break yet in our ſoules? Doe we ſee how it growes Lighter and Lighter in the Souls of Men? If we doe not perceive thoſe Streakes and Flakes of Light, which multiply upon the ſpirits of men, pointing out the neere Approach of our long-lookt-for Sunne; Let us clothe our ſelves with ſhame, and confeſſe, We are Phyſitians of no value. We have not ſeen that Beame, which is in our owne Eye, not ſuffering us to diſcerne Day-light. But as we are Blind, ſo let us be Beggers too. And, as that Blind Begger in the Goſpel, let us ſit by the way, in which Chriſt comes; and as we heare the noyſe of his paſſing by, let us cry aloud, *Thou Son of David, King of Spirits, have mercy on us : Lord Jeſus! that we alſo may receive our ſight: that our Fleece may not be dry, while it raines on the reſt of the earth; that our Soules may not be in the Dark, while Glory flowes in upon other Spirits.*

3. *Enquiry.* *Doe you ſee your Saviour, as He comes in the Viſible Part of Things?* Mat. 24. 8. The Lord Jeſus diſcourſing of His Comming, having before ſpoken of Warres, Famines, Peſtilences, Earth-quakes; tels us in this Verſe: *All theſe are the Beginning of Sorrowes.* Tis in Greek, Ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων, *The Beginning of Pangs.* The Commotions and Strife in This viſible Frame are the *Pangs* and *Throes*, by which It labours to bring forth Chriſt in the Spirit.

Pſal. 97. 4, 5. You may reade the Manner and Diſcovery of this Approaching Glory. *His Lightnings enlight-*

enlightned the World : The Earth Saw and Trembled. The Hils melted like Wax, at the Preſence of the Lord; at the Preſence of the Lord of the Whole Earth. Nations, Kingdomes, Nature, the Elements feele the Approach of Jeſus Chriſt, and receive the Impreſſion of His Preſence increaſing upon them. How unnaturall then are we, if we be inſenſible of it! how Worthy to be caſt forth from the Nature of Things into the Outermoſt Darkneſſe!

Seas of Common-wealths and Counſailes rowle and roare. Mountaines of Worldly Greatneſſe melt away. Rocks of Humane Strength after the firmeſt Combinations and Conſolidations cleave aſunder. Doe we not yet perceive the Lord Jeſus? The Earth & Hearts quake. Peſtilences are kindled. A Smoke of Obſcurity, Vncertainty and Confuſion flyes over the Face of Things A Fire Burnes. Doe we not yet feele our Saviour? His Enlightnings Enlighten the whole Earth. Extraordinary Paſſages of Providence, little leſſe than Miracles to confirme the Preſence of Chriſt in the midſt of us : High and Heavenly Truths publiſhing themſelves, even as the Brightneſſe of His Comming : Theſe frequent Flaſhings forth of His Glory, are the Enlightnings, with which He Enlightens the Earth. Doe we not yet See Jeſus Chriſt?

Heb. 1. 2. The Holy Ghoſt begins to ſpeak of the 2d. Comming of Chriſt, *v.6.* He goes on diſcourſing of the Same Thing to the 12. Verſe. There He ſaith to Him : *As a Veſture, thou ſhalt folde them up*, (meaning, Heaven and Earth) and *They ſhall be Changed.* Suppoſe a Man by Miracle, Borne and Grown up in One Midnight. Day now begins to come on : This Man to

whom All Things were almoſt alike before; now perceives Barren Shores, Hanging Cliffes, Devouring Seas on one Hand; on another, Pleaſant Fields, Faire Buildings, a Peacefull Country. As the Light increaſeth, the Face of theſe Things ſtill Changeth, Preſenting Freſh Horrours, and fuller Beauties. Would not this Man Amazedly Wonder, whence theſe Formes of Things ſhould grow round about Him, with ſuch Sodainneſſe and Change? till He look't upward, and Saw the Light of Heaven, as It goes on in it's Courſe, viſiting the Earth, and thus Changing it as a Garment.

Who is not Amazed to See the Changes that are made in the Garment of This Earth? One Day we ſee it, as a Field Flouriſhing with faire Hopes; another Day, that Field vaniſh't, and in its Place, as a City on Fire, or a Sea of Blood. He that now diſcerns not the Light of Heaven, the Brightneſſe of the Godhead, which is Chriſt Comming upon us, and thus Changing us; what manner of Night is He in? Sure a Night, as Black, as the Shadow of Death.

The Night is a Seaſon for Heavineſſe. You that See not the Lord Jeſus, how He comes up, upon the Earth, and Invades it with His Troops, as the Prophet ſpeaks: *Habak.* 3. Sit downe in Heavineſſe, Senſible of that Night which Surrounds You. But as you Sit, Watch, as the Watch-men, for the Morning.

This ſecond Comming of Chriſt, is, as the dayes of *Noah*. The Lord Jeſus in the Spirit ſhall be both Ark and Flood: An Ark to thoſe which are taken into Chriſt, [illegible] them high above all miſeries towards Heaven: A Flood carrying away inſenſible Perſons, and Scorners [illegible] Everlaſting Woe. This

This is the Firſt Ground of Humiliation, *Inſenſibleneſſe.*

Unſuitableneſſe in our Counſailes to the Courſe of Chriſt's Comming. The Comming of Chriſt calls for Two Things. 2. Ground.

1ſt. *A Reſpect to Chriſt in all our Counſailes.*
2. *A Reſignation to Chriſt for the Conduct of* Thoſe *Counſailes.*

1. *A Reſpect to Chriſt in Counſaile. Ezekiel* ſaw The Glory of God: *Ezek.* 1. This Glory was the Spirituall Frame of our Saviours Divine Comming upon His Chariot compoſed of Living Creatures and Wheels: Angels Spiritualized, Bodies Angelized. In this viſion He ſaw the State of Jeruſalem, and accordingly forewarn'd the Jewes.

As the ſhadow went back upon the Dyal of *Ahaz*, ſo *Hezekiah's* life was ſet back from Death. The Perſon of our Lord Jeſus is the Diall of Time, as the Godhead is in the Courſe of it's Glory advances or withdraws upon this Diall: So it points out the Riſe or Ruine of Perſons and Things.

We read, *Revel.* 1. That God gave to Chriſt the Revelation of Things by a Light of Glory, in His own Perſon; to this end, that He might ſhew to His Servants, what will quickly Be. Our Lord Jeſus is that Word of God, which is to be, the Man of our Counſailes. On Him we are to look, in Him to ſee, what *ſhould be*; by ſeeing God in His own Formes: what *ſhall be*, by ſeeing God in All Formes of the Creature.

This

This is Reaſon, ſay the Heathen. A Connexion of Things Paſt, with thoſe which are Preſent, a Derivation of Things to come out of Both, for Diſcovery and Direction. This is a Dark Shadow of Chriſt. He is the Reaſon of a Chriſtian, who unites and repreſents by a Perfect Light, all Three States of Things, calling Himſelfe by this Three-fold Name; He that is, He that was, He that is to Come.

2. *A Reſignation to Chriſt for Conduct.* This is the ſecond Thing, which Chriſt calls for in His ſecond Comming. *I am Alpha and Omega ſaith the Lord, He that is, He that was, He that is to Come, the Almighty,* the All-comprehending: *Revel:* 1. 8. The Spirituall Comming of Chriſt, is the great Tide of Things; this way the fulneſſe of the God-head pours forth it ſelfe from Sea to Sea, from the Beginning to the End of Things, Both in Himſelfe. Happy is He, who puts Himſelfe into the Current of this ſtream; ſwiftly, ſmoothly, ſafely ſhall He be carryed along upon it to His End.

There is Mention of a Wheel, *Prov.* 20. 26. *The King ſhall bring the Wheel upon the Wicked.* Saint *James* ſpeakes of the *Wheel of the Creation*: *James* 3. 6. For ſo 'tis in Greek, τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως. Our Lord Jeſus comes on as the Great Wheel of Things, repoſing in it ſelfe, and rowling on with it ſelfe, thoſe, who are taken up unto it: But bringing it ſelfe over thoſe which fall out of it, and breaking them in pieces.

There are two Things which expreſſe an unſuitableneſſe in our Counſailes to the Comming of Chriſt.

1ſt. *The Directing our Paths by a Humane Prudence.*

2. *The*

2. *The Deſigning an Earthly Power for the Purſuit.*

1st. *Unſuitableneſſe: The Directing our Paths by a Humane Prudence.* The Iſraelites in the wilderneſſe made a Golden Calfe for their Guide, after the Example of the Ægyptians, who worſhip'd an Ox for their Chiefe God. For this *Moſes*, ſay they, we know not what is become of Him. What was the ſucceſſe? They were forc'd to embitter their Drink with the Powder of this Calfe.

Have any of you been thus tempted, to make the Calf of Humane-Policy your Counſellour, becauſe this is the God of Nations? or to think; *We know not what This Jeſus, or His Comming in The Spirit meane? Shall we truſt our ſelves, and the Kingdome to a name, an ayrie Fancy?* If you have been thus tempted, I hope your own Piety and Prudence will prompt you to grind this Calf to Powder by a Penitent Contrition, and make it bitter to your Spirits, by a Kindly Remorſe.

I humbly commend to you one ſtory at large recorded: 1 *Sam.* 13. *Samuel* promiſed *Saul* to come at a Day, He delay'd. *Saul* feared the *Philiſtines* comming upon Him with a Mighty Body; the Dividing of the People from Him: He growes weary of *Samuel's* ſtay, and forceth Himſelfe to ſacrifice. If you have ſo fal'n, ſo forc'd your ſelves, for ſuch reaſons, to ſacrifice, to eſtabliſh a worſhip without the Divine Appearances, becauſe they have been delay'd: O repent and feare, leſt *Samuel's* meſſage to *Saul*, be to you alſo: *Now is the Kingdome divided from you*, this way, by which you thought to confirme it to you.

Let us at laſt be Converted, and become as Little chil-

dren, learning what that Meanes, *To Obey is better than Sacrifice, and to Hearken, than the fat of Rams.* To Hearken for the Breathings and whiſpers of the Lord Jeſus; to Obey the Breakings in of the God-head upon us, is more than All Burnt-offerings, or our Beſt Performances.

2. *Unſuitableneſſe. The Deſigning an Earthly Power for Purſuite of our Counſailes.* When Iſrael look'd round about upon the Intereſts, Inclinations, Imployments, Sufficiencies of Neighbour-nations: When Iſrael reflected upon her own Conſtitution, Strength, Numbers: Had Iſrael Peace? When *Jehoſhaphat* joyn'd his ſhips with thoſe of the King of Iſrael, were not His ſhips broken in pieces? *Thou ſhalt deſtroy all them, that go a whoring from Thee: 'Tis good for me to draw neer to the Lord,* ſaith the Holy Man: *Pſal.* 73. 50. The Earthly Image is the Strumpet, Humane Prudence the Eyes of this Harlot, which are as ſnares; Humane Power the Hands, which are Nets and Bands. He that is allured and caught by theſe, is upon the Brink of a Deep Pit, if not already ſinking in it.

Gen. 9. 17. Mention is made of a *Serpent* that *biteth the Heels of the Horſe, ſo that His Rider falls backward.* The *Policy* of Man is a *Serpent*, *Power* is the *Horſe* on which He rides. Take heed of making theſe your Truſt or Triumph. If you do, your own Policy will bite the Heels of your Power, and diſorder that: Your owne Power diſordered will caſt you to the Ground, and then oppreſſe you with its own weight.

I paſſe now from the ſecond Ground of Enmity to the Third.

En-

3. *Ground.* 3. *Ground.*

Enmity in our Affections to the Intents of our Saviour's Comming. The Intents of our Saviour's Comming are Two:

1ſt. *To Conſume the Fleſh.*
2. *To Call us into the Spirit.*

1ſt. *Intent of Chriſts Comming; To Conſume the Fleſh. Revel. 6.* When our Jeſus rides foremoſt upon a *White-Horſe*, he is followed by a *Red, Black, Pale Horſe*, bringing on *Warre, Famine, Death.* Theſe are His Troops, with which He comes up upon the Nations, and invades the Earth.

In the Progreſſe of this Mighty King, as He goes on Conquering; An Earth-quake ſhakes All Things, the Sun becomes Black, the Moon as Blood; Stars fall like untimely figs; Heaven paſſeth away as a Scroll rolled together, v. 12. 13. 14. Thus all Fleſhly ſtrengths faint, Gloryes fade at the preſence of the Lord. The moſt Spirituall Appearances of God thorow Fleſh are darkned and diſ-appeare: The brighteſt of Fleſhly Formes, The faireſt letter of the Higheſt Myſteries, become ſeeds of Warre, and ſink in blood: Men like Stars, moſt Eminent for Height, Luſtre, Influence, fall thick to the Ground, like untimely figs, preventing their Maturity by their Ruine: The moſt Flouriſhing Common-wealths, the Faireſt Churches, like Heavens, roll themſelves into Confuſion. Thus Chriſt comes in Flaming Fire to all Fleſh.

2. *Intent of Chriſts Comming, is, to Call us into the Spirit. 2 Theſ. 2. 1. Paul* ſpeakes of *The Comming*

of Chriſt, and our Gathering together unto Him. As the Horſes of Fire, and Chariots of Fire came down from Heaven to take *Elijah* up into them: So the Lord Jeſus deſcends in the Glory of the Spirit, that He may raiſe us above the world, riding with Him on the Circuits of the ſame Glory. If I go away, ſaith Chriſt, I will come againe, and take you to be there where I am.

Every Fleſhly thing, is a vaile between us and Divinity. All our Converſation in the Fleſh, is an Alienation from God, a Deſcent towards the Depths of Darkneſſe below.

The Lord Jeſus comes forth in the Spirit, conſuming the vaile of Fleſh, like Fire. Then we enjoy the ſame Appearances, performe the ſame actions in a Divine Life. While the Spirit is our Element, God comes forth in us in all our Acts: God comes forth before us in all our Objects.

There is a Two-fold Enmity in our affections towards this Two-fold Intent of Chriſt in His Comming.

1. *An Adheſion to the Fleſh.*
2. *An Averſeneſſe from the Spirit.*

1ſt. *The Firſt Enmity is an Adheſion to the Life of Fleſh.* Our ſoules cleave to the Fleſh-pots: Our Spirits are drawn down into a land of Bondage, and detain'd there, by the Rank ſcent of Garlike and Onions. We are very unwilling to travell thorow a wilderneſſe, though it be unto a Land flowing with Milk and Honey.

We are like *Lot*, we know not how to leave this *Sodome* of the Fleſh, till we be drawn forth by the Hand of

of Angels. Then we are ſtill like *Lot's* wife when we are come forth from the City of this World, caſting a longing look back upon it in the midſt of its Flames. But if we be like her in her fault, let us be ſo too in the Conſequence of it. She was chang'd into a Pillar of ſalt. So may we as in anſwer to the Type, if we bring forth a Spirit of Remorſe and Fire, like ſalt, to conſume the Fleſhly, Corrupting Part; that the Divine Part may be preſerv'd untainted to Eternity.

2. *The ſecond Enmity is an Averſeneſſe from the Spirit.* Jeſus Chriſt promiſed His Diſciples the Effuſion of the Spirit, at the Diſappearance of His Fleſh. He ſpake to them of Divine Powers, Lights, Gloryes, Joyes, of the Higheſt Company and Contents which ſhould come, when His Spirit came. Yet the Diſciples were ſad, and as dead men ſtill, when their Saviour ſpake of His Death. The Spirit appear'd to them a Miſerable Comforter and Comfort, when they were no more to have a groſſe ſight of their Jeſus in Fleſh. He was as None to them, when He was to be Onely in the Spirit.

When *Peter* felt Himſelfe born up alone by the working waves, he feares, faints, and begins to ſink, though he have the Call of Chriſt to carry him on, and Chriſt Himſelfe in his Eye to infuſe Spirits into him. This is an Example for us: When we cal'd by God, begin to feel the Foundations of the Earth, and the Seeming-firme Land of Senſe withdrawing from us, when we are now Lanching forth into the Sea of the God-head; we no ſooner feel our ſelves left upon the waters of the Spirit, to be ſuſtain'd by them, but Immediately we ſink our ſelves by our feares and unbeliefe.

Let us then now weep, that we have refuſed the All-quickning Spirit, which is our Jeſus, as if there were no Life in this Spirit, or no Light in this Life, as if God were a wilderneſſe, and the Building of God had no Foundation or Faireneſſe in it. Let us now returne weeping and ſay, *We have feared to commit our loves, hopes, and joyes to Thee, O meek, O Mighty Jeſus! But all our Springs are in Thee, thoſe that feed our outward ſenſes, our inward Faculties, with Streames of Life, Truth, Strength and Pleaſures. Thou art our onely Huſband, the Image of all Loves, and Lovelineſſe to us, the Beſt Image of our ſelves. Come thou downe upon us, appeare in thine Inviſible glories, and make our ſoules, ere they are aware, like the Chariots of Aminadab.*

Thus I have concluded the Firſt Uſe for Humiliation.

2. *Uſe.* *For Caution. Take heed of making any Oppoſition againſt the Comming of the Lord Jeſus.*

I ſhall begin this uſe with an humble profeſſion, that my deſire is to have every thing which I ſpeake underſtood, as proceeding from him, who would faine ſpeak, and live in a Continuall ſenſe of the Doubtfull Dimneſſe of that Light of Reaſon, which twinkles in his breaſt; as alſo of the want of oyl to feed the Flame of the Spirit to any Height or Conſtancy. I do therefore onely preſent, what paſſeth from me, ſubmitting all ever to any Brighter Light in whatſoever Candle-ſtick it ſhine. My care ſhall be, eſpecially in the ſubject of this uſe, while I am in this Twi-light, to avoid Particular Concluſions, and Peremptory Determinations.

I ſhall in theſe Termes ſet before you theſe Two Cautions.

1. *Take*

1. *Take heed how you Judge, or Confine the Comming of Chriſt.*

2. *Take heed how you furiouſly oppoſe any thing, that pretends to the Advancement of Chriſt in His Comming.*

1. *Caution. Take heed how you Judge or Confine the Comming of Chriſt*, and that for Two Reaſons.

1. *He comes as a Spirit.*
2. *He comes in the Darke.*

1. Reaſon. *Chriſt comes as a Spirit.* Who can foreknow, or ſet the wayes of a Spirit? who can comprehend a Spirit in any outward Forme? Is it not free to All, and from All? When Chriſt was riſen, he ſometimes put on thoſe ſhapes, in which he had formerly liv'd, or died; as to *Thomas*: Sometimes he cloth'd Himſelſe with ſtrange ſhapes; ſometimes uncloth'd Himſelfe of All. For now He was raiſed into the Spitit, in which as in a Divine Ward-robe he comprehended All ſhapes, to put Himſelfe forth in them, or to put them under His Feet at pleaſure.

Saint *Paul* thus reaſons: *Coloſ.* 2. 20. *If ye be dead in Chriſt, why as living in the Fleſh, are ye ſubject to Ordinances which periſh in the uſing?* But this Reaſoning is much more ſtrong: If Chriſt be Riſen from the dead, why do we ſubject Him to Ordinances, as if He were ſtill living in the Fleſh, or rather, as if He were not come in the Fleſh, who is the Lord of All Fleſhly Rites?

Formes are ſweet Helpes, but too ſevere Lords over our Faith. They may be Ornaments to our Face and Neck,

Neck, ſerving the Beauty of Chriſt's Appearances to us, and His union with us. But then they muſt be of Gold or Precious ſtone, taken out of the Mine or Treaſury of the Spirit. So worne, they may become the Heires at age, the Spirit-born Princes. But if they be of Iron or Braſſe, laid upon our Feet and Hands; that is, Groſſe in Fleſhly Darkneſſe, binding up the Activity and Motion of our Spirits towards God; then are they ſad Marks of the Bond-womans Children.

The Body is eſteem'd a Priſon or Grave to the Soul; becauſe it tyes the Soul up into One Particular Appearance, ſuffering it not to enlarge it ſelfe to any other, but as they are reflected in This Glaſſe. When the Eternall Spirit is faſt'ned, and proportion'd to any One Form of Things, is it not now impriſon'd or buried? It was a ſeaſonable and High Contemplation, that of *Solomon* at the Conſecration of the Temple: *The Heavens, & Heavens of Heavens cannot hold thee, How much leſſe this Houſe, which I have made?* When we Conſecrate, or converſe with any Ordinance or Peculiar way of worſhip; let us then remember, that our Object is the Perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, that Wiſdome of God, whoſe way is more untrac'd than the Eagle, whoſe extent is wider than the Earth. The Heavens of Heavens cannot take in All of Him, to Containe or Confine Him; much leſſe any One Ordinance in this world, or Fleſhly Faſhion.

2 *Chron.* 6. 18.

'Tis in vain to attempt to ſhut up Chriſt in any Thing. Though you kill Him, that you may keep Him ſafe; though you lay Him in a Grave hewne out of a Rock in a Garden, a Frame contriv'd with greateſt ſtrength and Beauty; though you ſet the Seal of Authority upon it, and a guard about it; yet Chriſt will riſe

riſe with an Earth-quake and appeare to His Diſciples.

2. Reaſon. *Chriſt Comes in the Darke.* The Lord darkens His own Appearances, who then ſhall Determine the way of Chriſt's Comming to us, when He makes it His Deſigne to obſcure it? Why do we Condemne the Diſcoveries of Chriſt for being above our Reach, beyond our Meaſure and Light, when 'tis His Plot and will, to Come in Clouds?

If the Light of the world pleaſe, as He breaks forth, to hold the eyes of the wiſeſt Men, and Holyeſt Diſciples, that they ſhall not diſcern Him, though He walk in the mid'ſt of them; Let *Us* bear our Blindneſſe, and not lay the fault on Heaven, calling *Day*, *Night*; or cenſuring the *Light*, for being *Dark*.

Jeſus Chriſt tels *Peter, What I do, thou knoweſt not, but thou ſhalt know hereafter. Ioh.* 13.6. Our Saviour puts forth Himſelf to Men in Many Appearances, of which they are uncapable, to lie as ſeeds in their Spirits, and perhaps after many years grow into diſtinct Fruits in their underſtanding, and ripe Fruits in their Affections. Then they know that a Prophet hath been among them: That the Higheſt Appearances of God have been plain before their Eyes, when they have leaſt imagin'd it.

The Wiſe-man that ſpake in Parables and Proverbs tels *Prov.* 25.2. *'Tis the Glory of God, to conceale a Thing* (*the Word* in Hebrew) *and of Kings to ſearch out the matter, (the Word.)* God makes it His Deſigne in this World, to bring forth the Eternall word, the Brighteſt Image of Himſelf, ſo as that we *Seeing* Him ſhall not *See* Him. But then it pertaines to the Kingdome of Chriſt, as the proper Glory of that, to comprehend this Dark World, and make it underſtood by *it's* Light. Take heed then how you judge the Comming of Chriſt by the Day-light of this world, ſeeing 'tis His Glory to come in the Night.

The Devil too labours to Darken the Comming of Chriſt.

Sweeteſt and Cleareſt Spirits in which the Bride-groome comes forth moſt Beautifully, are by Him clog'd and clouded with the Diſguiſe of Faction, Sedition, Licentiouſneſſe, and Atheiſme: as in *Paul*, and Chriſt Himſelf. The moſt Heavenly Truths, which are, as the lookings forth of this King of Glory, are by him preſented to the World in the moſt deformed Appearances of Helliſh Blaſphemies.

As the Devill hath his Arrowes which flie in the Dark; ſo hath Chriſt: His Comming in the Spirit, is an Arrow, that flies in the Dark at Noon-day; Woe be to him, that ſtands in its way, it will pierce his Liver. Our Saviour ſpeaks it of Himſelf: If the Good man knew, at what hour the Thief would come, he would watch, and not ſuffer his houſe to be broke open. If you know the Time and way in which Chriſt will certainly come, you might *define* that, and *confine* Him. But now fear to be miſtaken, becauſe of that place of Scripture: *The ſtone, which the Builders refuſed, is become the Head of the Corner: Pſal.* 118. 22. The ſtone which the Builders refuſed, is become the Head of the Corner. *O ye Builders! Take heed, what ſtone ye refuſe. O ye Men! Take heed of ſtumbling at that Stone which the Builders refuſe, leſt your Buildings and Selves be broken upon it, but That grow up into a Building of Glory, which can never be broken or ſhaken.* Thus much for the Firſt Caution.

2. *Caut.* *Take heed how you furiouſly oppoſe any thing, that pretends to an Appearance of Chriſt. Habakkuk* ſpeaks of Chriſt in the Spirit: *C.* 3. *v.* 4. *His Brightneſſe was as the Light: Hornes were in His Hand, and there was the Hiding of Power.* All the Spirituall Diſcoverys of Chriſt are as *Hands of Light*, by which He puts forth Himſelf, and takes hold of the world. The Inviſible Spirit, the Preſence of the Godhead in it's Two-fold Piercing Principle of *Love* and Wrath; Theſe are the Hornes in the Hands. Take heed how you reſiſt

fiſt theſe Hands, when they are ſtretch'd forth, leſt you ruſh upon the Hornes. If you launch forth with fury upon any ſtream of Spirits or Opinions, and ſtrike upon the Power of the God-head, lying hid like a Rock in thoſe waters; how great will the wrack and Ruine of your Souls be?

I will cloſe this uſe with the *Story* of *Balaam*. He went forth upon his Aſſe to curſe the Children of *Iſrael*, having firſt obtain'd full leave from God for it, as he thought; His Aſſe gives back, cruſheth his foot againſt the wall. He is enrag'd: Yet if his Aſſe had gone on, he had bin ſlain. For an Angel ſtood with a Drawn Sword in his way. I intend no particular Application, but onely a generall Alluſion. *Balaam* is fleſhly Man, that hath the viſions of God in the Fleſhly Image. The Aſſe, the Externall Power of Nature and the Creature, on which he rides. When you go forth againſt any, that call themſelves Iſrael, and think your ſelves moſt clearly ſent from the mouth or face of God: yet if then your Aſſe retreat, fall back, Ruſh upon the walls of Difficulties; take heed of putting him on too fiercely: Let it fairly warn you to fear: Perhaps the Power of Nature and the Creature, ſees the Lord Jeſus Comming forth, with the Sword of His Spirit Brandiſh'd in his Hand. If it ſhould go on, it might carry you into an Abſolute Ruine. Take heed then of being furious againſt any thing that pretends to be an Appearance of Chriſt.

For Conſolation. When firſt you pleaſ'd to call me to this, I thought thus with my ſelf: *What can I ſay more then hath been ſaid? To what end ſhall I ſpeak? or, Have we any more Hopes yet in our Breaſts? We have bled and wept, wept and bled again for many years. Still we weep, and ſome feare leſt we bleed again with greater danger. As Jacob complain'd of Laban: ſo is it with us, Our wages, our Hopes have been chang'd now theſe ten times. Our Hopes and our Saviours have devoured each other, as Pha-* *Uſe* 3.

raoh's Lean Kine did the Fat: yet as They, are ſtill Lean. What do we cry to a ſleeping God, or a God at a great Diſtance from us, as in a journey? or Are our Services in the Church, our Sacrifices in the Field no more to the living God, than the Gaſhes which Baal's Prieſts make upon their own Fleſh?

While I was thus diſcouraged in mine own Spirit, I was refreſh't with a *Two-fold Comfort*, with which I ſhall now indeavour to comfort you.

1. The *Way of Chriſt is in the Dark.*
2. *The way of Chriſt is among the Angels.*

1. *The Way of Chriſt is in the Dark.* Then may our King be come a good way on in His Travels of Love and Glory towards us, though we yet diſcern him not. We know not how Near he may be to us, how full of Life and Sweetneſſe before us, ready now to diſcover Himſelf, when we are weeping for His Abſence, and complaining that ſome-body hath carryed Him away: as *Mary* complain'd to Himſelf in the likeneſſe of a Gardener.

The Sun in a Miſt or Fog ſteals on upon the World unperceiv'd; at laſt he breaks forth, and we wonder to ſee him ſo farre advanc'd towards High-noon. So doth our Spirituall Sun ſtill keep his pace behind the Clouds, ſtill mounting higher and higher. When He ſhall diſcover, we ſhal be amaz'd to ſee, that he hath made ſo great a March in ſo ſhort a Time: We ſhall wonder how he hath ſtoln Himſelf, and ſo much of Heaven unawares into the mid'ſt of us. Then ſhal a man ſay: How is a Goodly plant of Glory grown up to Heaven out of the Earth, in one ſhort Night of Trouble?

Jeſus Chriſt is not *Slack in His Comming*: 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. Chriſt ſaith: *I go to prepare a place for you.* As a Rich Pillar or Stately work is often vail'd, till it be quite finiſh't; and then preſented at once in its full beauty: So the Lord ſtayes from Appearing, that he may make ready a Glory Prepar'd for us,

us: when his worke is Perfect, then will he diſcloſe it, and we with Admiration ſhal acknowledge, that the Lord hath not bin ſlack in His Comming; but hath made a great Approach to Men in a Little ſpace of Time.

When God brought back our Captivity, as Rivers in the South, then were we as Men that Dream'd: ſaith the Pſalmiſt. When our God ſhal take off the vail from that Glory, which He is faſhioning in the mid'ſt of us; then ſhall we be as in a Dream. It wil be hard to believe, that ſuch a Changed, ſo new an Appearance of Thiugs in ſo ſhort a time can be Real, and not Imaginary or Phantaſtick.

Ezek. 1. 4: Out of the *North* came a *Whirl-wind*, out of the *Whirl-wind* a *Cloud and Fire*, out of the *Cloud and Fire*, the *Colour of Amber*, out of that *Four living* Creatures and Four Wheels, the *Chariot* in which the *Son of Man* was ſeated on a *Throne*: v. 26.

Who can tell, what Glory ſhall from Heaven viſite the Earth, when thoſe Clouds, which now are upon us, ſhall open themſelves? In this Whirl-wind, Clouds, Fire, Jeſus Chriſt with a Traine of Gloryes hath bin all along deſcending, and at laſt He ſhal alight amidſt us. Then ſhall the Whirl-wind, Clouds, and Fire be in a Moment diſmiſt for ever at His Appearance.

2. Comfort. *The way of Chriſt is among the Angels. He comes with His H ly Angels.* Open then your eyes, and ſee each good Man, Counſail, Intereſt with its Angel, each Angel with His Jeſus; a Million of Angels in every One, ſurrounding his Perſon.

Job 38. 22. We read of *Treaſures* of Snow and Hail. As Angels are the Chariots of Chriſt; ſo they are His Chambers and Treaſuries. In the Sweeteſt ſeaſon, God can on a ſodain bring forth from the Boſome of an Angel roaring

Tempeſts, which lay there ready prepar'd. When Storms are moſt violent, God ſends forth an Angel, at whoſe Appearance a Pleaſant ſerenity ſhall immediately ſmile upon the face of Things, when we are ſad, and ſee nothing abroad but Dark Clouds comming after the Raine, and Showers of Blood: Yet then our Angels in the midſt of us, thoſe Inviſible Chambers, may be heap't full of rich Bleſſings, which they can pour forth upon us, more ſuddenly then we can think it.

Angels are the wombs of the God-Head in this Creation, *Job* 38. 21. When all outward things ſeem barren of Hope, thoſe wombs may be Teeming, and Big with joyes for us.

Theſe are the Chariots of Iſrael, and Horſes thereof. In the Head of theſe is Jeſus Chriſt, the Captaine of the Lords Hoſt. Each of Theſe is an Hoſt, nay a Legion of Armies, nay a Fountain. For in Scripture they are called Ἀρχαὶ, The *Principles* or *Springs* of the world.

Let no face of Things diſmay us. Is one Army broken? the Angel of the Lord Jeſus is a Fountain of forces, which can pour forth a continued ſtore of freſh Armies, if you need them? Do we loſe our friends, Men of beſt Wiſdome, Courage, and Integrity taken off the Stage, or off their Excellencies? The Angel that hath the Charge of this, can unexpectedly diſcloſe a new ſtock of worth, and Race of Men. Are our Enemies Politick or Potent? yet we may ſleep ſecure. For the Holy Angels full of Eyes and Wings are planted round about them, as a Guard upon them. One Angel lies at the bottome of their Hearts, as a Mine, ready to ſpring it ſelf upon their Counſailes, when they are now ripe. Another Angel wraps himſelfe about the Foundation of their force, as a Fire, ready at His appointed Time to devoure it and them.

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Angels are the unities of Things in the Creature. Though the water of a River be continually paſſing away, yet the River is ſtill the ſame, becauſe 'tis fed from One Spring. There is One Angel of our Armies, One of our Counſailes, One for Strength, One for Wiſdowe, One for Proſperity, in which Jeſus Chriſt comes forth among us. Our Counſailes may be ſcatter'd, our Armies broken; yet we ſhall have the ſame Strength, the ſame Army: For both are fed from the ſame Unity, their proper Angel.

Revel. 1. 1. Chriſt tels *Saint John, The Golden Candleſticks are the Churches.* c. 2. v. 5. He threatens the Angell of the Church *to remove the Candleſtick.* The Candleſtick of Gold is the Church in the Spirit, which is ever Entire, ever Pure. As this Candleſtick is drawn into Heaven, ſo a Company of Men on Earth loſe the Beauty, Unity, and name of a Church. When this Candleſtick is againe let down into the Fleſh, and ſet upon the Earth: The Church is the ſame againe in Integrity and Glory. Thus the Vnity, Strength, Intereſts of Good Men are comprized in their Angel. This is the Candleſtick, in which they alwaies ſhine. When their Light ſeems loſt in the greateſt ſtormes; 'tis but the Candleſtick, Removed: Jeſus Chriſt can return that into its place in a Moment, and ſo reſtore your Day.

Jeſus Chriſt ſends forth His Angels to gather His Saints from the four Winds, at the reſurrection. When the Body of a Saint crumbles and ſcatters into Duſt; Every Duſt lies gather'd up into the Boſome of ſome Holy Angel. There all the Single Duſts are comprehended in one Form of a Glorious Body. In This Form the Angel brings them forth at the Call of Chriſt: This is the Reſurrection of the Body. This is as true of each Piece of Life and Death in our Perſons or Affaires while yet we are on Earth. When our Happineſſe, Hopes, and Hearts are ground into the ſmalleſt Duſt;

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They then lie Compact, and compleat in their Angelicall Chamber; on a ſudden, as at the Blaſt of an Angels Trumpet, or Glance of an Angels Eye, can Jeſus Chriſt give our Dead Hopes a Glorious Reſurrection out of their Duſt.

Let us then in the midſt of our Sorrows ſing, *The Lord Raignes: Let the Earth be glad. The Lord Comes. Clouds are upon us, but Angels ride upon thoſe Clouds, and the Lord Jeſus upon thoſe Angels.* Open your Eyes, ſee the King, as He comes in Glorious State. If *Eliſha* ſaw *Eliah*, as he aſcended, he was to have the ſpirit of his Maſter doubled upon him. If we ſee our Saviour as He deſcends in a Divine Glory; we ſhall be cloth'd with His Spirit, and His Mantle: Inward Beauties, Outward Proſperities, falling freſh from the Perſon of Chriſt on us, as He comes down upon us.

Let us then ſpread our own Garments, our Earthly Powers, Policies, or Proſperities, in His way, under His feet. And as He paſſeth along, let us cry aloud in our ſongs: *Hoſanna, Hoſanna, Save now: Bleſſed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord: Hoſanna, Now Save us.*

FINIS.

XUM